



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Template Version 2.09

Required Report - public distribution

Date: 10/24/2007

GAIN Report Number: TU7062

Turkey

Poultry and Products

Turkey's Avian Influenza Preparedness Steps 2007

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Report Highlights:

With assistance from international organizations and NGOs, the government of Turkey has been taking many steps to prepare for another outbreak of Avian Influenza this year.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Annual Report
Ankara [TU1]
[TU]

The government of Turkey, with assistance from international organizations, has taken many steps in recent months to improve its preparedness for possible outbreaks of Avian Influenza this year. The precautionary steps taken since June are summarized below.

In June and September, the Ministry of Agriculture (MARA) organized one "train the trainers" seminar in each of the following provinces: Ankara (June 10-11), Elazig (June 18-22), Samsun (September 10-14), and Izmir (June 17-21). A total of 40 provinces participated in these comprehensive seminars. Subjects ranged from surveillance techniques, animal movement control methods, compensation to epidemiological principles and vaccination methods.

From September 2-5, MARA and the Turkish Veterinary Association hosted an international congress on Avian Influenza. International participants included representatives from the OIE, WHO, FAO, World Bank (WB), and the World Veterinarian Association. Also in attendance were government officials from the EU and from the United States. Dr. Charles Roney, USDA veterinarian, made a presentation on U.S. National Poultry Improvement Plan. USDA Deputy Undersecretary for Regulatory and Marketing Programs Dr. Chuck Lambert also participated in the Congress as well as USDA/APHIS Regional Veterinarian Dr. Robert Tanaka and FAS Agricultural Counselor Mr. Ralph Gifford.

The main topics of the Congress were:

- 1- Global Situation of Avian Influenza and the International Approach
- 2- Avian Influenza in Turkey and Selected Countries
- 3- Are we prepared for the next outbreak?
 - a. Legislations and Plans of Immediate Actions
 - b. Importance, Effects and Coordination of Avian Influenza Management
 - c. Prophylaxis and Control Strategies for Avian influenza
 - i. Biosecurity
 - ii. Vaccines
 - iii. Backyard poultry
 - iv. Wildlife
 - v. Commercial enterprises

On October 9, MARA distributed a list of precautionary measures against Avian Influenza to all of the 81 Agricultural Provincial Directorates. This list, which is published on MARA's Protection and Control website, included guidelines for immediate training to veterinarians, immediate distribution of equipment, and proper storing and handling of equipment. Most importantly in the case of an outbreak, MARA stresses the appropriate procedures for slaughtering broilers and keeping culling reports. MARA bans the sale of layers in general and the sale of all live poultry in open markets will be prohibited. MARA also calls for all representatives from the poultry sector to meet with government officials from various Ministries and exchange ideas and evaluate the poultry situation.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MOEF), MARA organized an Avian Influenza exercise simulating a real outbreak from October 16-19 in Samsun province. This national pandemic exercise on preparedness training was supported by the EU. This drill basically tested the Turkey's Emergency Action Plan. Representatives from the FAO, EU, WB, Veterinary College of May 19 University, Turkish Poultry Association and Commercial Poultry Association participated as observers. In collaboration with Samsun provincial officials, MARA planned to develop a national disease crisis center and a local disease crisis center during this exercise.

During this same period, MARA also coordinated two “train the trainers” courses on precautionary measures for wetland areas. The first one was held in Manyas, Balikesir, in the western part of the country, on October 16-19, and the second one was held in Samsun province on the Black Sea between October 22nd and 25th. Provincial Agricultural Directorates, Veterinary Colleges, NGOs, and the MOEF participated in this exercise which trained 15 participants in each course.